



DATE: April 15, 2025

TO: Transit Advisory Committee

FROM: Jared Hall, Transit Manager

SUBJECT: Transit Manager Report

Transit Manager's Report to Transit Advisory Committee

Ridership on Petaluma Transit provided 25,001 rides in January 2025 compared to 21,560 rides provided in January 2024, a 16.0% ridership increase.

Ridership on Petaluma Paratransit service provided 984 rides in January 2025 compared to 800 in January 2024, a 23% increase.

Transit Operations – Contracted Services

Petaluma Transit contracts for a large proportion of its transit operations. This includes driving, dispatch, fleet and facility maintenance, safety and several other areas of operations. Currently the City is contracted with MV Transportation to provide this service through an agreement that has run from FY18-FY25.

This being the final year of the contract, the City has need to conduct a new competitive bidding process in order to create a new operations contract for FY26 and beyond.

Accordingly, staff created and issued a request for proposals (RFP) that was issued on February 10. This RFP is asking for submissions from contractors who are able to operate all three modes of Petaluma Transit service (fixed route, paratransit, and microtransit). The contract will be a maximum of eight years with a base award of five years (FY26-FY30) and one three year option period (FY31-FY33)

New items added from the prior contract will include: operations of LumaGo microtransit service, additional software options for paratransit dispatch software, operations of electric buses, an expansion in the number of service hours that the contractor provides.

The timeline for the procurement process is as follows:

Date	Milestone
February 10, 2025	Selection Ad-Hoc Group - Kickoff
February 18, 2025	RFP Issued
February 27, 2025	Virtual Pre-Proposal Conference – 10:00 a.m. Optional Site Visits -11am
March 13, 2025	Last day for submission of questions
March 18, 2018	Issuance of Final Addenda, if any
April 9, 2025	Proposal submittal due date and time; 5:00 p.m. PST
April 10, 2025	Proposals and scoring sheets to Selection Committee
April 16, 2025	Selection Ad-hoc Group Meeting
April 23, 2025	Virtual Proposer presentations, if required
April 24-31, 2025	Best and final negotiations
May 6, 2025	Transit Advisory Committee Meeting (Special Meeting)
June 2, 2025	Petaluma City Council award contract
July 1, 2025	Commence service

A selection ad-hoc group was formed to provide input throughout the procurement process including in the review, scoring and selection of the preferred contractor. The ad-hoc group will be involved in scoring of the proposals received. The group consists of seven members including two members from the Transit Advisory Committee (Gail Abrams and Dave Alden).

The ad-hoc group will be meeting on April 16th to review the proposals and agree on a consensus for preferred vendor and award of the contract.

Recommended action on awarding of the transit operations contract will be presented to TAC in a special meeting on Wednesday, May 7th (details being finalized) and is scheduled for consideration at City Council on June 2nd.

LumaGo Microtransit Update

LumaGo continues to demonstrate strong ridership and success since its launch on September 30, 2024. As of April 5, 2025, the service has completed **12,831 rides**, with our highest ridership day on April 4, 2025, when **127 rides were completed in a single day**. The service consistently meets demand, maintaining an **86.1% ride request fulfillment rate**. To better accommodate peak time demand, LumaGo now operates with two vehicles between **1–6 PM, Monday through Friday and on weekends**.

The program continues to gain traction in the community, with over **4,200 accounts created** and more than **240 service expansion requests received**. LumaGo has earned an average rating of **4.9 stars**, underscoring its popularity and positive reception among users.

These results highlight LumaGo's potential to improve mobility within Petaluma. However, as the service progresses, it's essential to evaluate its role within the broader transit system to ensure sustainable operations and complementarity with fixed-route and paratransit services.

Key Statistics (as of April 5, 2025)

- Highest Ridership Day: April 4, 2025 (127 rides completed)
- Total Rides Completed: 12,831
- Met Demand Rate: 86.1%
- Accounts Created: 4,200
- Riders with 5+ trips completed: 392
- Utilization (Riders per Hour): 4.5
- Average Rating: 4.9 out of 5

Links for LumaGo assets:

- [LumaGo Service Area](#)
- [Download the LumaGo app](#)
- [Request LumaGo marketing assets](#)
- [Request LumaGo in your neighborhood](#)

AC Transit bus donation

Staff have taken possession of four free 2008 Van Hool 1200 series transit buses from AC Transit in early March 2025. The 40' diesel buses are being donated by AC Transit in partnership with Petaluma Transit demonstrating their excellent collaboration and partnership as a leader in transit throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.

The buses will help to provide additional availability of fixed route buses to run on fixed route service over the next two years while the City receives its first electric buses and



2008 Van Hool 1200 series bus- est. revenue service begins 4/2025

puts them into regular revenue service.

Staff are currently in the process of getting the vehicles road ready to operate Petaluma Transit service. The vehicles are now titled/registered, have radios and the GMV system installed in them. All vehicles have been given a thorough inspection by MV maintenance staff prior to entering service. Drivers will begin training on the buses the week of April 14th. Exterior graphic design will be completed in the second half of April.

The buses will begin revenue service for Petaluma Transit in April 2025.

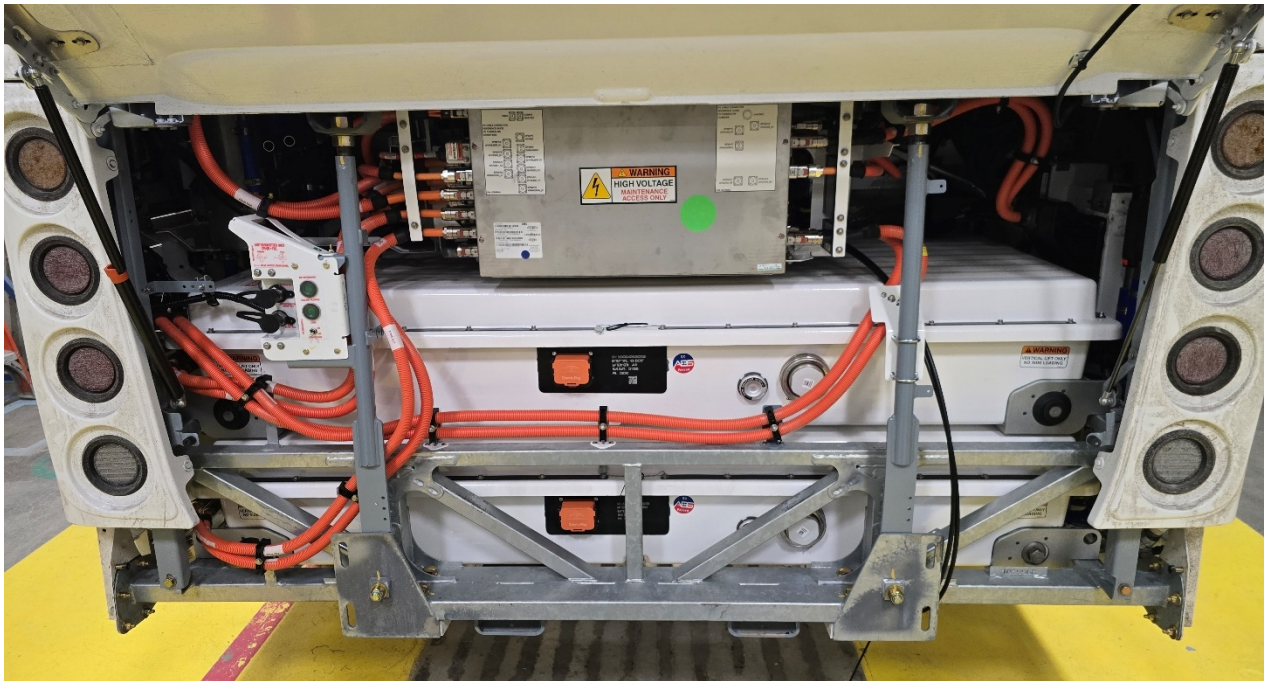
Electric Bus Build Update

Council approved the purchase of the first four battery electric, zero-emission transit buses for the City of Petaluma in December 2023. The buses will include two 35' and two 40' New Flyer Xclesior zero-emission, battery electric buses. They will feature sleek, modern interiors and a striking exterior design that will echo the buses' advanced features and commitment to sustainability.

Production of the buses started on January 13, 2024 and will continue until through June 2025.

The bus shells have now been completed at the New Flyer Winnipeg factory and resumed building at the Crookston, Minnesota plant on March 17th.







The City of Petaluma has contracted with Vehicle Technical Consultants to provide in-plant inspection services throughout the build process. VTC has been providing weekly updates on the status of the bus builds throughout the process and ensuring compliance with the vehicle build specifications and Buy America requirements.

As part of the upcoming deployment of the zero-emission transit buses, City staff is currently developing a comprehensive marketing campaign to generate excitement about the sustainability and innovation of this project.

The campaign aims to re-energize public interest in fixed-route transit services by emphasizing the benefits of electrification, including zero emissions, quieter operations, and cutting-edge design. Through strategic outreach and engaging visuals, the campaign will position the electric buses as a cornerstone of Petaluma Transit's future.

Key Campaign Goals:

- **Build Community Excitement:** Highlight the innovative features and environmental benefits of the electric buses.
- **Promote Fixed-Route Service:** Use the campaign to showcase the value of Petaluma's fixed-route services, encouraging new and returning riders to explore the system.
- **Sustainability Education:** Reinforce the City's commitment to sustainability by showcasing the move to a cleaner, greener fleet.

As the designs for the buses' exterior wraps are still in development, the campaign will emphasize the transformative impact of electrification while leaving room for creative flexibility. City staff are drawing inspiration from the sleek interior features (as shown in the attached example) to ensure the exterior design aligns with the buses' cutting-edge aesthetic. Staff will provide further updates on the campaign, including promotional events and materials, as we approach the buses' delivery in mid-2025.

Paratransit Evaluation and Programs

Staff continue to self-administer the paratransit evaluation process. Recent highlights include:

- Staff received and processed 27 applications for March 2025
- Staff mailed out 12 eligibility reminder letters for March 2025

The average processing time (from the receipt of a fully completed application to approval) was **4.3 days in March**, well within the Federal Transit Administration's requirement of 21 days.

Upcoming Programs and Improvements

To further enhance paratransit services and increase awareness of transit options in Petaluma, staff are developing initiatives to modernize and improve the program:

1. Public Transit Education Series:

In collaboration with the Petaluma Senior Center, staff will offer a 3-part series titled “Your Guide to Car-Free Travel in Petaluma.” This series will provide valuable information on using public transit, including paratransit, fixed-route services, and LumaGo, empowering residents to explore transportation options that fit their needs.

This initial round of this series was completed in March 2025.

2. Paratransit Rider Guide and Recertification Application Updates:

Over the next six months, staff will revitalize the Paratransit Rider Guide and streamline the recertification application process. These updates aim to enhance efficiency, improve user experience, and reflect the evolving needs of our community.

3. Focus on Efficiency and Accessibility:

Staff are committed to maintaining a high level of service while exploring opportunities to increase efficiency and productivity. These changes will ensure that paratransit services continue to meet the needs of Petaluma’s residents effectively.

Further details on these updates and programs will be shared in the coming months, as staff works toward modernizing this essential service and improving the service throughout the community.

Transit Employee Appreciation Day – March 18, 2025

Petaluma Transit proudly participated in the National Transit Employee Appreciation Day on March 18th, joining agencies across the country in celebrating the dedication, professionalism, and compassion of our transit operators.

City staff led a comprehensive appreciation campaign that included:

- Custom signage throughout the system
- Social media posts encouraging public commendations
- Gift bags and snacks provided to all drivers
- A special slideshow tribute shared at our most recent Safety Meeting
- A heartfelt appreciation card from the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC), which was genuinely appreciated by our staff
- Prize raffles for operators throughout the day

Community Response

The campaign generated a very positive response from the community, with riders calling, writing, and emailing to express their gratitude.

Here are just a few of the many messages we received:

“The driver avoided a collision and did a great job. He created a safe environment. Please make sure Damon is recognized.”

“Awesome service to the driver of Route 24 around 11:45 p.m. — he kindly called his mate on Route 3 so a rider could hop on. That’s teamwork!”

“Damon and Ricardo are the best drivers... so kind and sweet! Thank you!”

“Kyle is a great driver. He picks me up often and always wishes people a good day. He has a lot of experience and connects with the community.”

“My favorite driver is a toss-up between Kyle and Baldev. Both are really nice and make each person feel special — definite keepers!”

“I just moved here and I’m so thankful for Paratransit. I needed my medicine and couldn’t walk. Petaluma Transit service is GREAT!”

**“Muy buen servicio prestado, amabilidad, muy buen conductor.”*
(Translation: Great service, kindness, and great drivers.)

“God bless PT. The best driver is Baldev — a great driver and a great person. Give him a raise!”

“Lugine is kind and personable. He creates a warm and welcoming atmosphere and is incredibly hard-working.”

“Matthew B is such a pleasant and kind driver on LumaGo. He takes time to educate me on other transit options.”

“Dana is always helpful and reliable. Chris L is another really good guy — always pleasant, and I always feel safe.”

“I want to thank Al, Jamaal, and Alberto. They’re kind, funny, and engaging — they go above and beyond in what can be a tough job.”

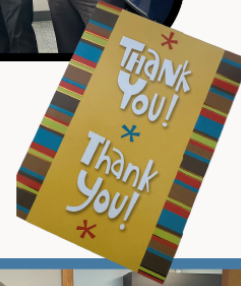
“I appreciate every single driver. Honestly, they do incredible work. I just wanted to help put a smile on their faces.”

“Thank you to every driver whose route I take daily. I appreciate your safe service and the improvements in timing!”

“Petaluma Transit is good — thank you!”

Several riders also provided feedback on vehicle needs, such as larger buses during peak times and additional bike racks on paratransit vehicles — valuable insights we will continue to consider as we improve the rider experience.

MARCH 18, 2025
**NATIONAL
 TRANSIT EMPLOYEE
 APPRECIATION
 DAY**



Marketing and Outreach

Sustainable Enterprise Conference

Staff attended the Sustainable Enterprise Conference in Rohnert Park on Thursday, March 27. The conference has met for over 20 years and provides attendees with a wealth of information on sessions related to various sustainability related programs and initiatives in areas including: planning, sustainable agriculture, clean energy, and transportation.

Staff joined in a panel presentation on sustainable transportation programs along with staff from the Sonoma County Transportation Authority, SMART, and the City of Santa Rosa. PT staff provided an overview of Petaluma Transit, the sustainability



related goals for the transit system and the City of Petaluma Climate Blueprint for Climate Action. Staff provided additional information on three major initiatives for Petaluma Transit: the PT Fare Free Program, fleet and facility electrification efforts, and LumaGo Microtransit service.

Transit Coordination

Staff attended the following Transit and Area Coordination meetings recently:

- SCTA Transit Technical Advisory Committee –April 9
- MTC Clipper Customer Service Planning -March 17
- MTC Transit Finance Working Group – April 2
- Transit Comms Meeting facilitated by BART- April 7
- Marin-Sonoma Coordinate Transit Study (MASCOTS)
 - Marketing Subcommittee – March 13
 - Planning subcommittee –April 1
 - Finance subcommittee – April 8
 - General Manager Committee – April 11

Community Outreach Events

- Senior Center Presentation-Fixed-Route-March 20
- Safe Routes to School Task Force – March 20

Upcoming Campaigns & Outreach Events

- **Saturday, April 19 – Butter & Egg Days Parade, Downtown Petaluma** - City Staff have begun working with the Downtown Association to prepare for the annual Butter & Eggs Parade and Festival. Petaluma Transit will run fare-free on the day of the event and will have added service to shuttle attendees to the event and a Petaluma Transit bus participating in the parade. LumaGo will be operating during the day of the parade for the first time ever, utilizing a modified service zone downtown due to the parade.
- **Sunday, April 27 – Petaluma Antique Faire, Downtown Petaluma** – LumaGO service will be operating during the day of the parade for the first time ever.
- **Sunday, May 4 –Future Fest & Expo – 12-4pm at the Petaluma Community Center** - Staff will again be in attendance to table at the fourth annual expo promoting local sustainability focused services and resources.
- **Saturday, May 10 - Inclusion Festival** - PT Staff are coordinating with event organizers to provide transportation information and promote transit access at this all-ages, accessibility-focused music festival. The event includes a silent disco, adaptive activities, calming areas, and community resources under this year's theme: *Empowering CommUNITY*. Petaluma Transit will highlight available services and encourage use of public transit for inclusive community events.
- **Thursday, May 15 - Petaluma Chamber of Commerce Business Showcase** - Petaluma Transit will participate in this annual event with an outreach table and a LumaGo vehicle on display. Staff will engage with local businesses to explore how LumaGo can support their customers, staff, and the broader community through accessible mobility options.

- **Bike to Work Day** – May 15, 2025, part of the larger [bike to work month](#) occurring in May 2025
- **Sonoma-Marin Fair** – Summer 2025
- **Petaluma Craft Beer Festival** – Fall 2025

New Fixed-Route Schedule Coming in Summer 2025

Petaluma Transit is launching a campaign to promote the benefits of fixed-route service. The campaign will center around the release of an updated bus schedule featuring improved time points, increased frequency on Routes 2 and 11, and a fresh, bold design that reflects the ease and sustainability of public transit.

TAC member recruitment

2025 recruitment for Petaluma Commissions, Committees, and Boards will be open from Monday, April 14, 2025 at 8:00am to Thursday, May 29, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

The Transit Advisory Committee will have three vacant positions to fill two year terms (all three positions are currently held by incumbent members who are eligible to serve and additional term and may reapply).

To learn more about the application process and submit an application, members of the public are encouraged to visit: <https://cityofpetaluma.org/ccbs/>

Next Meeting

A special meeting of the TAC will be held on Wednesday, May 7 from 4-6pm.
The next regularly scheduled TAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 20th, 2025

Attachment A. Jan 2025 - Fixed Route Stats

Attachment B. Jan 2025 - Paratransit Stats

Attachment C. Jan 2025 - LumaGo Stats

Attachment D. Transit Employee Appreciation Day 2025 - Info Sheet

Future Transit Advisory Committee Meeting **Agenda Items for Consideration**

- Transit Operations Contract Award
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) plan update
- Electric Paratransit Bus Procurement

Transit Advisory Committee members are requested to provide ideas and recommendations for additional items